

## Reflection Paper

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### Heritage Park 2.0

Public Park and Square for Social Sustainability

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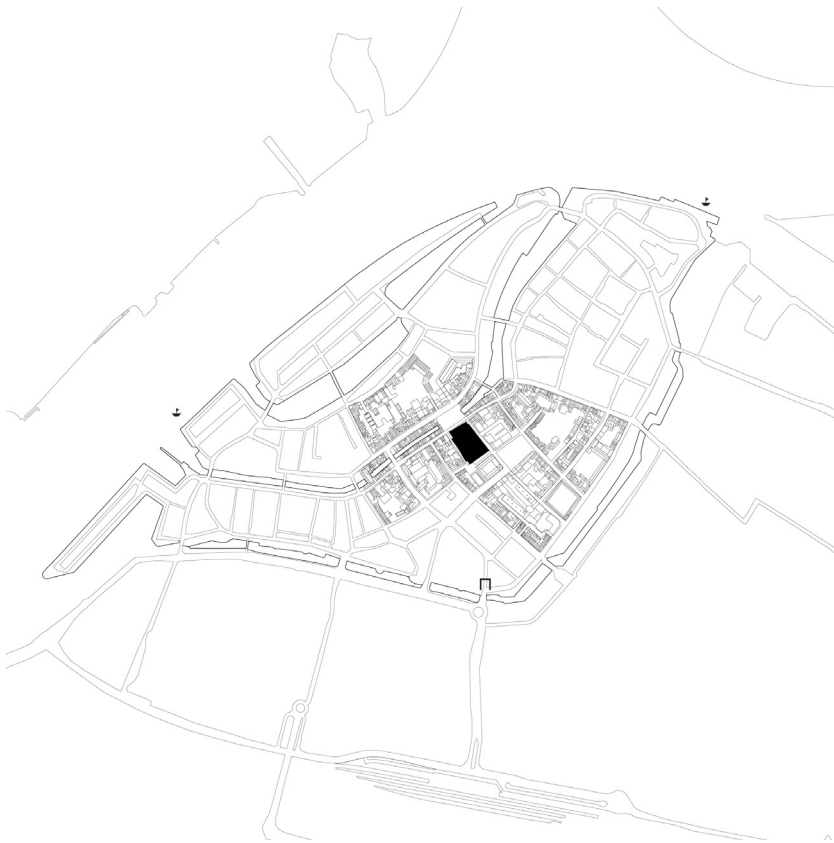
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Heritage & Architecture Studio  
Vacant Heritage. V&D's Department Store  
Spatial Building Typology Group

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Vacant Heritage - V&D's Department Stores



**Top**  
Site Plan, Location of Dorrecht Department Store.

All drawings and photos are author's own, unless referenced.

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## Introduction

Designing 20th century Heritage architectures may differ from those of the past that are being dealt nowadays. Before modernism, the appearance of architecture had more decoration on façade and different style design from contemporary architecture. Since the development of industry and technology, the appearance of today's architecture is not very different from those of the 20th century. However, the value of buildings is not just aesthetic and historical values. Kuipers and Jonge said in 'Designing from Heritage':

"In fact, the aging monuments of the Modern Movement have proven to be less flexible in practice when adaptations to new needs are required, than promised by the original designers. The built legacy of the twentieth century demands innovative approaches to heritage analysis in combination with creativity if it is to meet the 'challenge of change' it is faced with." (Kuipers & Jonge, 2017)

In other words, the heritage architecture in the future can be designed for different uses based on various values. Therefore, Dordrecht Vroom and Dreesmann could be a good example of 'Modern Heritage'. Because it had designed

by architect Jan Kuijt in the 1931 and it was renovated in 1999 based on public demand. 'Heritage Park 2.0' project focused on the cultural-value, use-value, and social-value of Dordrecht V&D department store. The ground floor of the department store is blocking two main squares, Statenplein and Scheffersplein, and before the department store bankrupted, people walked through the ground floor from Statenplein to Scheffersplein as a shortcut. This spatial value exists, although it is less clearly revealed than the visible heritage of the past. Therefore, the graduation project is researched and designed what is the value of Dordrecht V&D buildings that are important to people even after 100 years from now.

In particular, people's interests and uses will change, and the project was carried out with a focus on what attitudes as an architect should renovate heritage buildings. Therefore, this project has been researched and designed with a focus on the values of modern heritage renovation and, in particular, how the public space should be designed in the future. Furthermore, I think that this method of linking research and design can be used as a reference when developing modern heritage in the future.



**Left**

Dordrecht V&D Department store from Scheffersplein. Photograph by Haoyu Shi.

## Chapter 1 : Reflection on the Research

### Bottom

Figure 1.1. Photograph of Seonyudo Park in nowadays, Zijlstra (2014).

### 1.1. Why Focused on Space?

“What happens to the traditional twentieth century commercial areas in major Dutch cities in an era that everyone is shopping online? (...) Can you find indicators for building typologies that will become obsolete and are there general concepts for revitalization?” (Heritage & Architecture Studio, 2020)

Architectures are becoming with different purposes over time and as programs demanded by people change. For example, there is a good example of ‘Seonyudo Park’ in Seoul, Korea. (Figure 1.1.) The original program was the water purification facility that filtered the water of the Han River and supplied it to the citizens of Seoul, but as time passed, it became difficult to play the role of a water purification facility any longer, and it was renovated as a park. “Sungryoung Joh”, an architect, preserved the existing concrete structures and water tanks, and designed the green would cover the structure. The aim of project is that program can be changed but the ‘Space’ itself would not change easily.

In addition, project ‘SESC Pomepeia’ designed by Lina Bo Bardi has been transformed into a space where people can enjoy cultural life. In other words, as abandoned architecture is renovated for different purposes, structures and spaces can be stayed to the next generation.

So my main research question was ‘If the Heritage department store is transformed into a social public space, what are the possible spatial aspects to re-use? In order to change the department store into a public space, such as a park or square, I researched what spatial possibilities exist, and further designed what is a social space that people can communicate with.



Heritage & Architecture Studio. (2020). Vacant Heritage Department Stores. Delft: TU Delft.

Kalk, P. (2020). What Happened to Public Space? A Quick Guide Through Europe's History. Retrieved from <https://www.arch2o.com/happened-public-space-quick-guide-europes-history/>

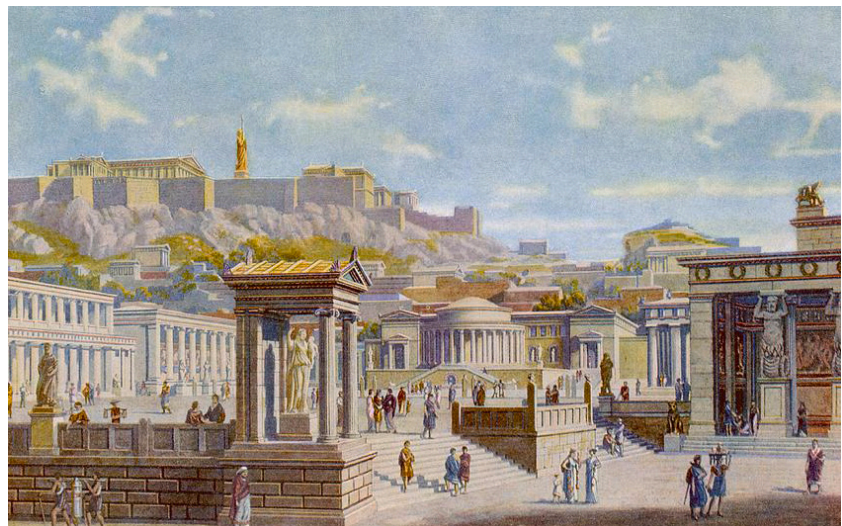
Figure 1.1. Zijlstra, H. (2014). Seonyudo Park [Photograph]. In Seonyudo Park, South Korea.

## 1.2. What is the Socializing Space?

Historically, the most important space representing a city was a square where people could gather. In the past, there was 'Agora' in Greece, the 'Roman Forum' in the Roman era, and the 'Market Square' in the Middle Ages. It represented the city itself and the most visible public space in the city.

"Public spaces make cities. (...) Citizens recognize themselves as members of a community only when they can equally access and use the public 'place', which also presents the result of evolution and growing up of the urban fabric." (Kalk, 2020)

Modern cities are changing rapidly by capital. Due to this trend, the 'public space' that played an important role in the city is gradually decreasing. These social spaces are somewhat smaller such as green parks and open squares in contemporary cities by modern capital developers. In these small parks and squares, people still drink coffee, meet friends, shop, and social activities take place. In addition, Covid-19 reminds us of the importance of how important meaning of socializing is to us. Therefore, in the graduation project, a 'public space' suitable for a contemporary city is designed between Scheffersplein, where cafe terraces are located, and Statenplein, where a market is held every weekend, and proposes what the next generation's public space will look like.

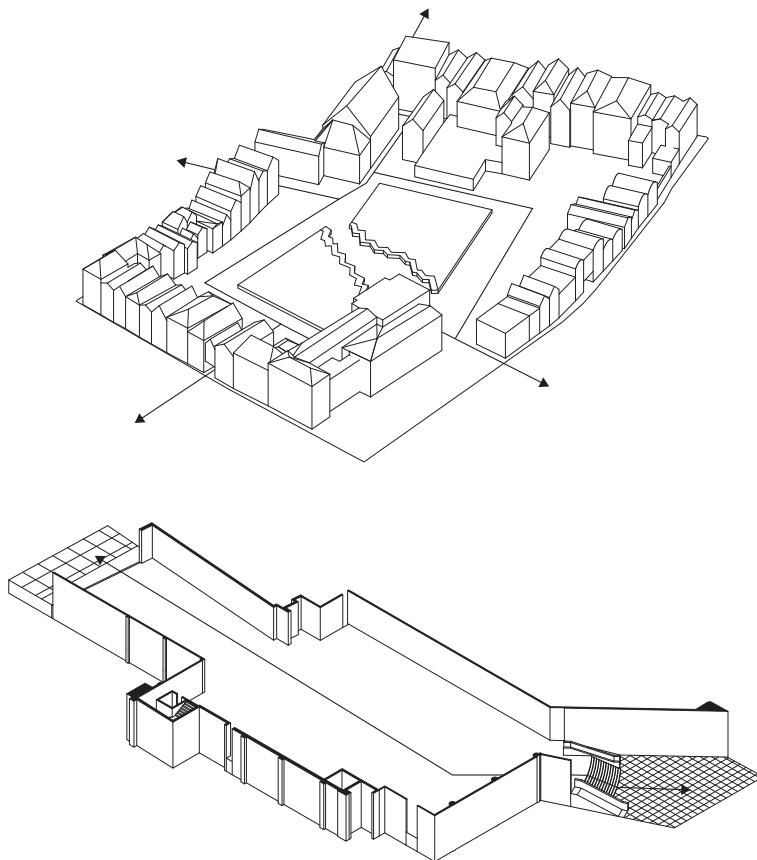


Vacant Heritage - V&D's Department Stores

The first research was to find out what spatial characteristics of public space have. In Aben and Wit's *The Enclosed Garden* (Aben & Wit, 1999), there are the spatial characteristics of public spaces in today's well-known city center. For example, 'the square des Bouleaux' in Paris is a small park located between residential areas in the city center. The park, which is hidden from the surroundings, has a spatial feature that helps people to form a better community in a protected small space rather than an open space.

### Top

Figure 1.2. Reconstruction of the Agora, Mary Evans Picture Library. (2018).



Also at the project's site Dordrecht, there is a 'Cloister garden' designed by Michael van Gessel. (Figure 1.3.) This park is also surrounded by residential buildings and the entrance is hard to find it. But after people find the entrance and enter, there is a natural park which is connected from one street to the other. This characteristics helped people to naturally use the park as a shortcut. Therefore, more and more people could use this park which increased the probability of socializing occurring.

As a result, the characteristics of public spaces could be known through research. Later, the Dordrecht V&D department store was compared and looked for what kind of spatial possibilities existed to become a contemporary public space. Our studio divided into City, Urban Block, Building Object, façade and roof scale, and compared eight V&D department stores in the Netherlands to research spatial characteristics. This is because it was necessary to analyze complex buildings by dividing them into various scales in order to research them in detail. By comparing the spatial characteristics of public space and V&D Department stores, five spatial characteristics and possibilities can be found: Connection, Dissolution, Hidden, Shell and Sequence. (Figure 1.4.)

**Top**

Figure 1.3. Comparison Space Typology between Park and V&D.



### 1.3. Meaning of the Research

Unfortunately, the public space I researched could not represent all public spaces. Dordrecht's public spaces, Hofjes, and today's contemporary parks cannot have same traits and it is needed more research to define a socializing space. Moreover, in the special period of Covid-19, it is hard to understand normal situation of Dordrecht city center. When research public spaces and people's behavior, it cannot represent normal situation of Dordrecht.

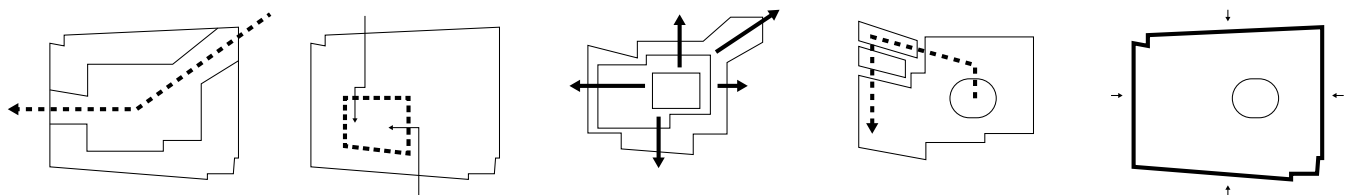
Nevertheless, the results of research are meaningful in that they visualized a rather abstract subject of social space as a 'space'. After finding a place where people gather, and analyzing the characteristics of the space, it could be defined as a space where people are more actively socializing when there are the above five characteristics. For example, when architects design

an urban square, if they simply create a large space, people do not use it well, rather, if it is a space that feels hidden and protected, a few people sit down and drink coffee and have a conversation.

Moreover, department stores are typical commercial spaces. As times change, traditional shopping methods are no longer suitable for new cities. In fact, the on-line shopping market is gradually expanding and has a much wider business area than buying products on the street. Therefore, it was of great significance in discovering what spatial possibilities would exist if a huge department store is renovated into a public space where socialization could take place.

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Figure 1.4. Five characteristics of Public Space. Research Results.



## Chapter 2 : Reflection on the Final Product

### 2.1. Relationship between Research and Design

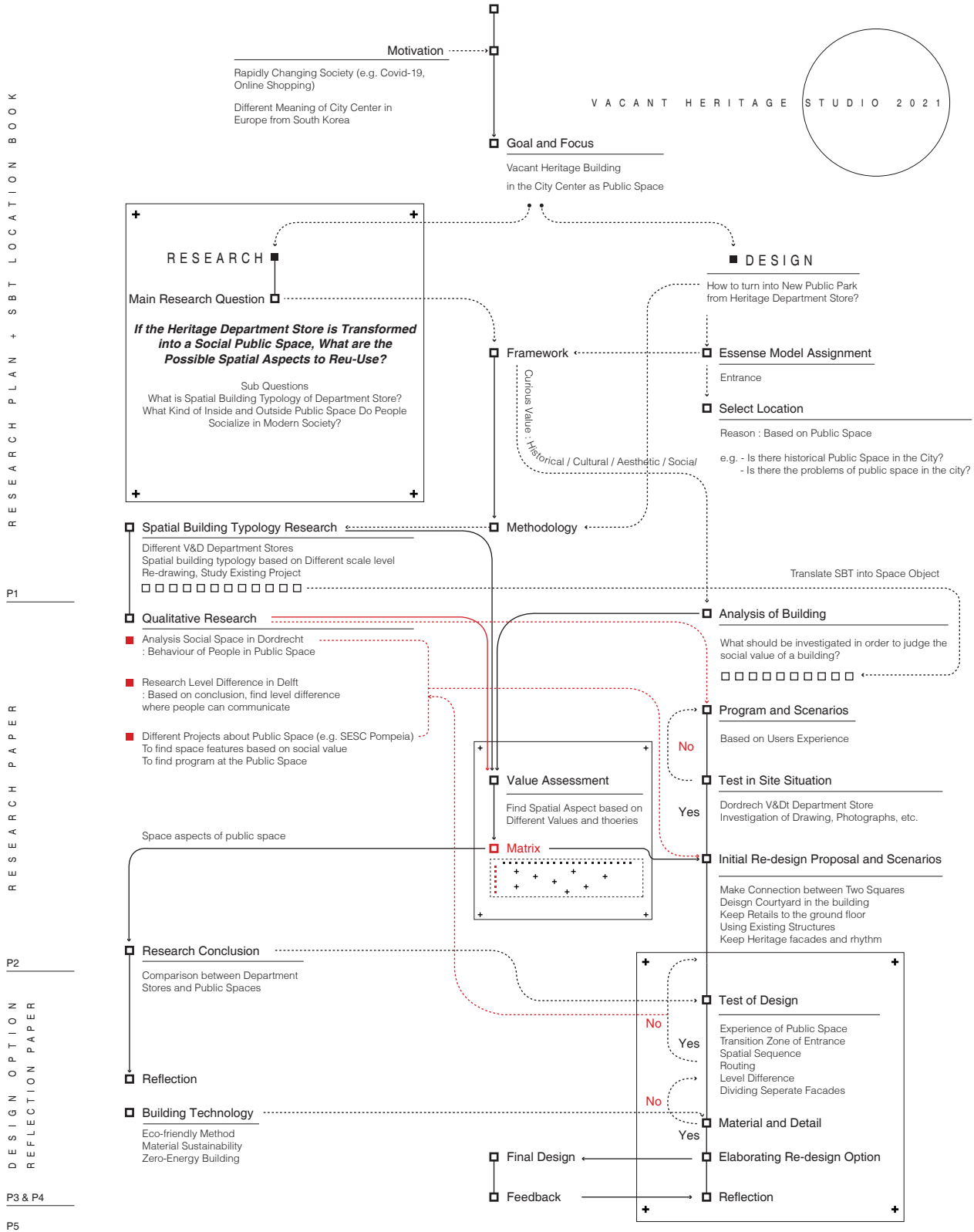
During graduation project, researching 'Spatial Building Typology' by Heritage Studio was the most important. As mentioned earlier, department stores are huge and complex buildings, so simply looking at the plan drawing is insufficient to understand the building as a whole. Therefore, the buildings were analyzed and compared with various scales. This SBT research has an overall influence on the design process, which can be divided into five stages: Select Location, Analysis of Building, Initial Re-design Proposal, Test of the Design, and Material and Details.

First, SBT research had impact on site selection. The Dordrecht department store located between the two lively squares, Scheffersplein and Statenplein, in the city. The square is the most essential space where social activities can take place. Therefore it was used as the most important factor in site selection.

In the analysis of building stage, urban block scale and building object scale were mainly used. For example, the Dordrecht V&D department store was previously a small building with an ever expanding design. As capital was put in and people's shopping culture began to flourish, the size of the department store grew. As the building evolved, the structure of the building evolved in different ways. This analysis served as a standard for dividing buildings in the design stage.

Based on this analysis of buildings, when the initial re-design proposal was proposed in the P2 period, the connection between the two squares became the main concept as the most important factor. During the department stores are worked, people used the ground floor as a shortcut to move between two squares by working SBT research, the core idea was to revive this 'Use-value'. Also there was a relationship between the department store façade and the street around the building. In the urban block scale, the other two streets except Scheffersplein side had a well formed narrow shopping street. So I wanted to keep this shopping street. In other words, we have found out how people's movement in the city is being formed through SBT research; new project can be positioned within the existing urban context.

Personal research on social spaces had a lot of influence in the stage of testing design. It was a process of taking pictures and checking whether the five themes mentioned above were actually taking place in the urban context. For example, there were people sitting and talking in a hidden space between buildings, and people gathering in the corners of a large square and eating lunch. That is why I was able to design these hidden and small urban spaces in the 'Heritage park 2.0' project.



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Figure 2.1. Structure of Research and Design in Project.

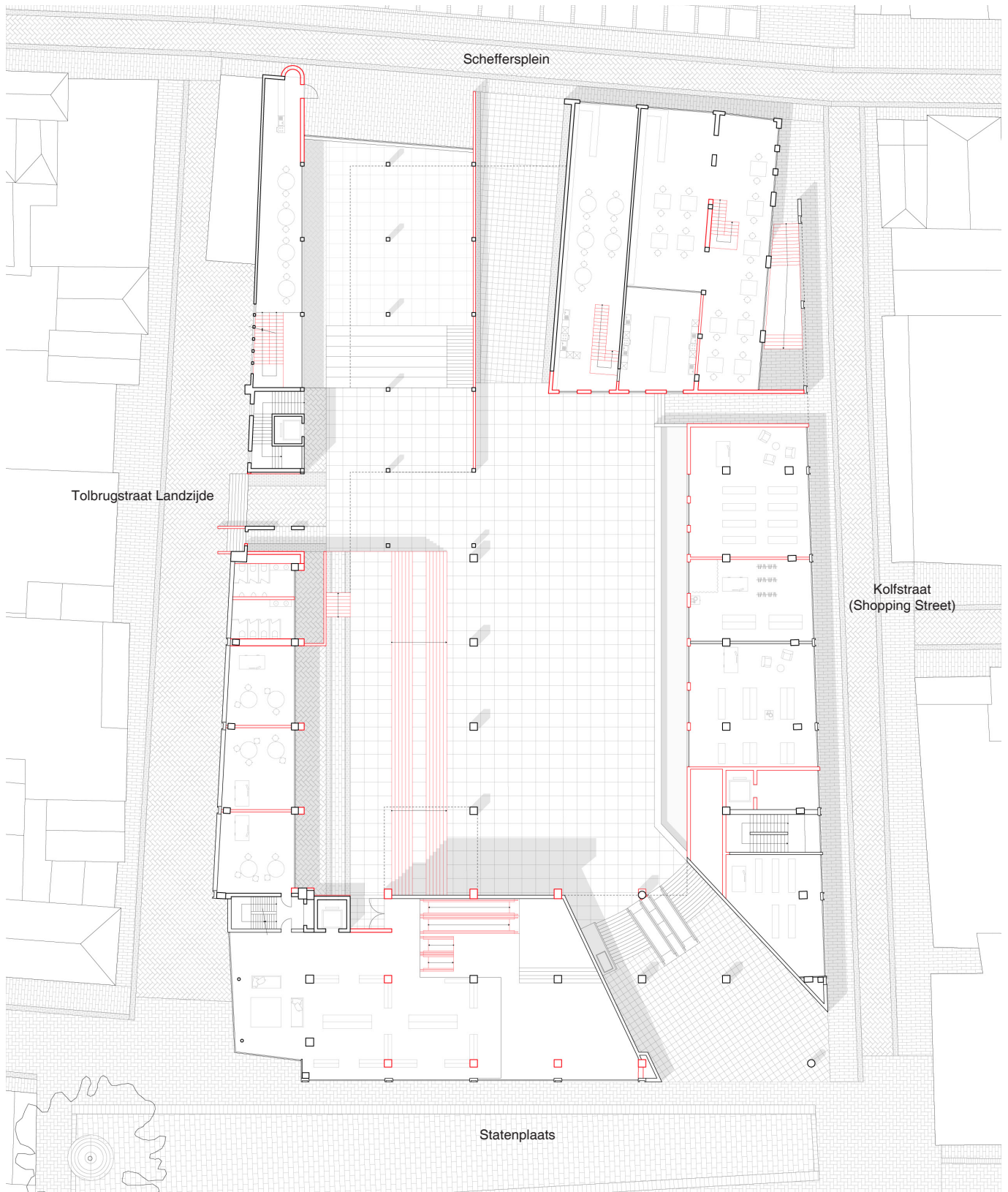
## 2.2. Design Overview

To explain the overall design, new parks and squares were designed between squares of different characteristics. From a business perspective, there are squares that become weekly markets or can be used as terraces in front of restaurants and bars. However, there are no public parks for people to meet in Dordrecht, such as Agora and Roman Forum in Greece.

To enter the new parks and squares, the entrance from outside streets was an important design element. There is a word in English called 'Threshold'. The meaning of Threshold I focused on is "The level or point at which you start to experience something, or at which something starts to happen or change" (Cambridge University Press, 2021). In other words, entering a new square from the outside was an important design essence for a new experience. In addition, in order to highlight these thresholds, the surrounding façade are designed with conservation. This is also largely related to the conclusion of individual research. Because if the park and square where you can feel cozy from surrounding facades, people can communicate more freely.

## 2.3. Value Assessment

During designing a project, the most basic part is value assessment. In the 'Designing from Heritage', when analyzing the value of heritage buildings, it can be divided into six categories: Story, Surroundings, Site, Structure, Space Plan, and Skin. Particular attentions in the Graduation project are Surroundings, Space Plan and Skin. Because SBT Research looked at V&D department stores in an urban context, the relationship between the surroundings and buildings was considered important. And also to understand space, analyzing the space layout in plan and section drawings is important as well. This assessment helped to value 'Cultural, use, and new-ness value'. Also skin is most visible part in the heritage architecture. Dordrecht V&D only had one main façade facing Scheffersplein on the heritage list. However, through the value assessment, the Park 2.0 project was designed to reflect the intentions of the existing architects by assigning not only the aesthetic and historical main facade, but also the cultural and usable values that people used the building.

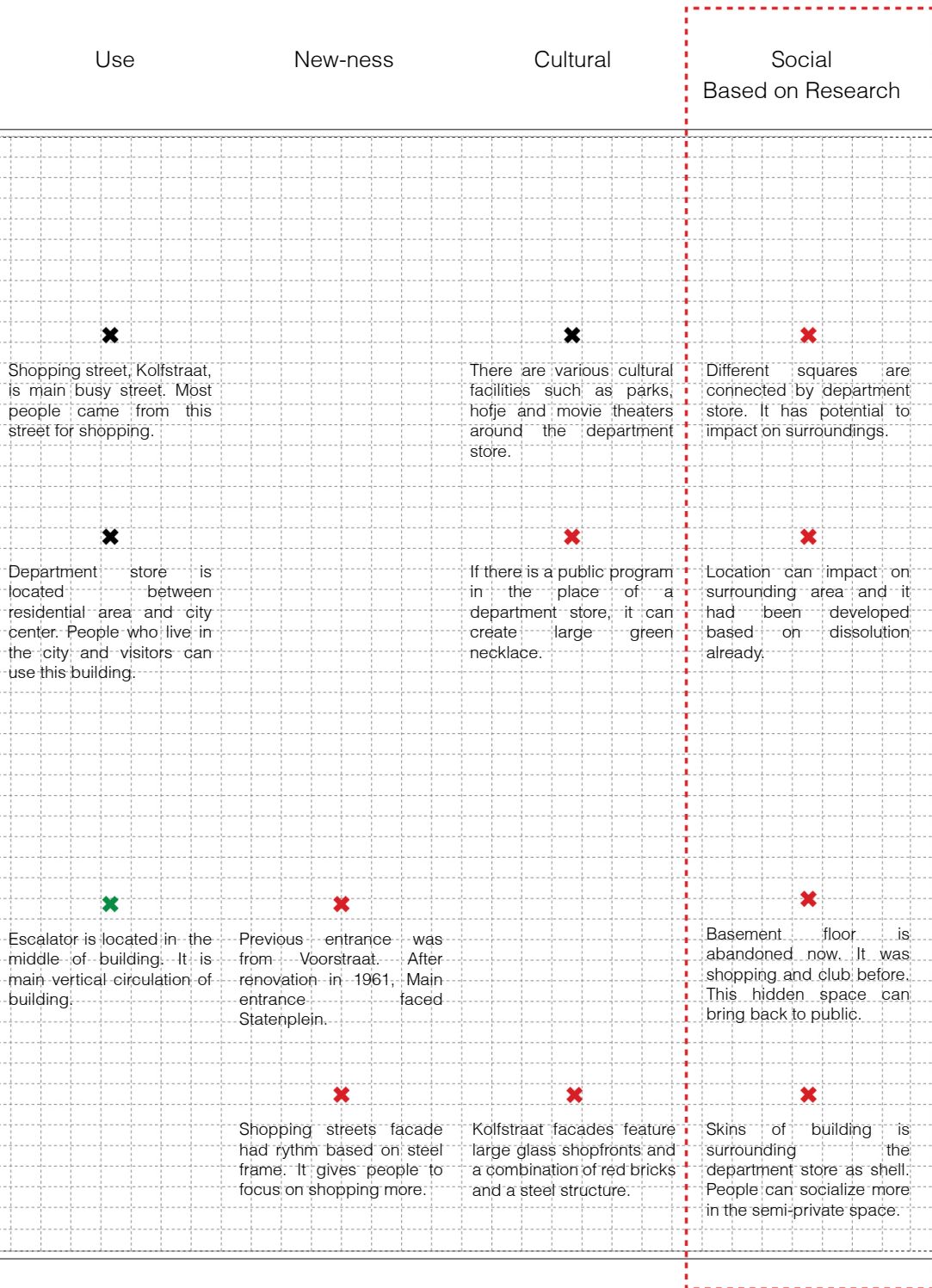


Vacant Heritage - V&D's Department Stores

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Figure 2.2. Final Proposal  
Ground Floor Plan.



	Age	Historical	Aesthetic	Commemorative
Story	✕ Most of the building had been lost in fire, especially the part from 1924 on Scheffersplein.			
Surroundings				✕ Until the complex was built, statenplein was a square in front of a department store. People also held various events in this square.
Site		✕ The locations of Grote markt, scheffersplein, and statenplein constantly changed. Among the changing public spaces, department stores are in an important position.		
Structure	✕ After fire, reconstruction with steel and timber structure keeping original design.		✕ Structure of main building part designed by Kuijt is still enough to use.	
Space Plan		✕ From 1932 to 2000, space is expanded and re-arranged constantly toward outside shopping street.	✕ Original main stairs are elegant with marble. But it's demolished already.	
Skin	✕ The main facade of the V&D in Dordrecht is facing the Voorstraat as constructed by Kuijt in 1932.	✕ From the mid-1920s his work as chief architect for Vroom & Dreesmann increased in size with Amsterdam School.	✕ Yellow bricks and a large steel curtain wall make materialize the main facade.	✕ The main facade had existed from 1932 to now. Most pedestrians can memorize this part as building itself.



- High Value
- Middle Value
- Less Value

**Top**  
Figure 2.3. Value Matrix based on Analysis and Research.

#### 2.4. Description of the Design based on Research

There are various values in design, but social value is the most important value for the project. This is based on social research, to find out what spatial possibilities are possible at the Dordrecht V&D department store, and to design it to preserve or interpret it.

The **connection** is the biggest feature that can be found in existing V&D department stores. People used a shortcut through the department store's ground floor to avoid using the narrow and crowded outside street, even if it was not for the purpose of shopping. This is designed not simply a narrow path, but a new square and park after passing the hidden entrance.

In addition, I wanted to make sure that the new connection does not feel like a new and unfamiliar way. To highlight the **dissolution** spatially, the same brick material as the actual Dordrecht city pavement was used for the pavement of the ground floor. Therefore, people feel as if they are walking on the streets of an existing city, and through this, the newly designed inner square is not an unfamiliar space, but a shortcut to a department store with cultural values that existed before.

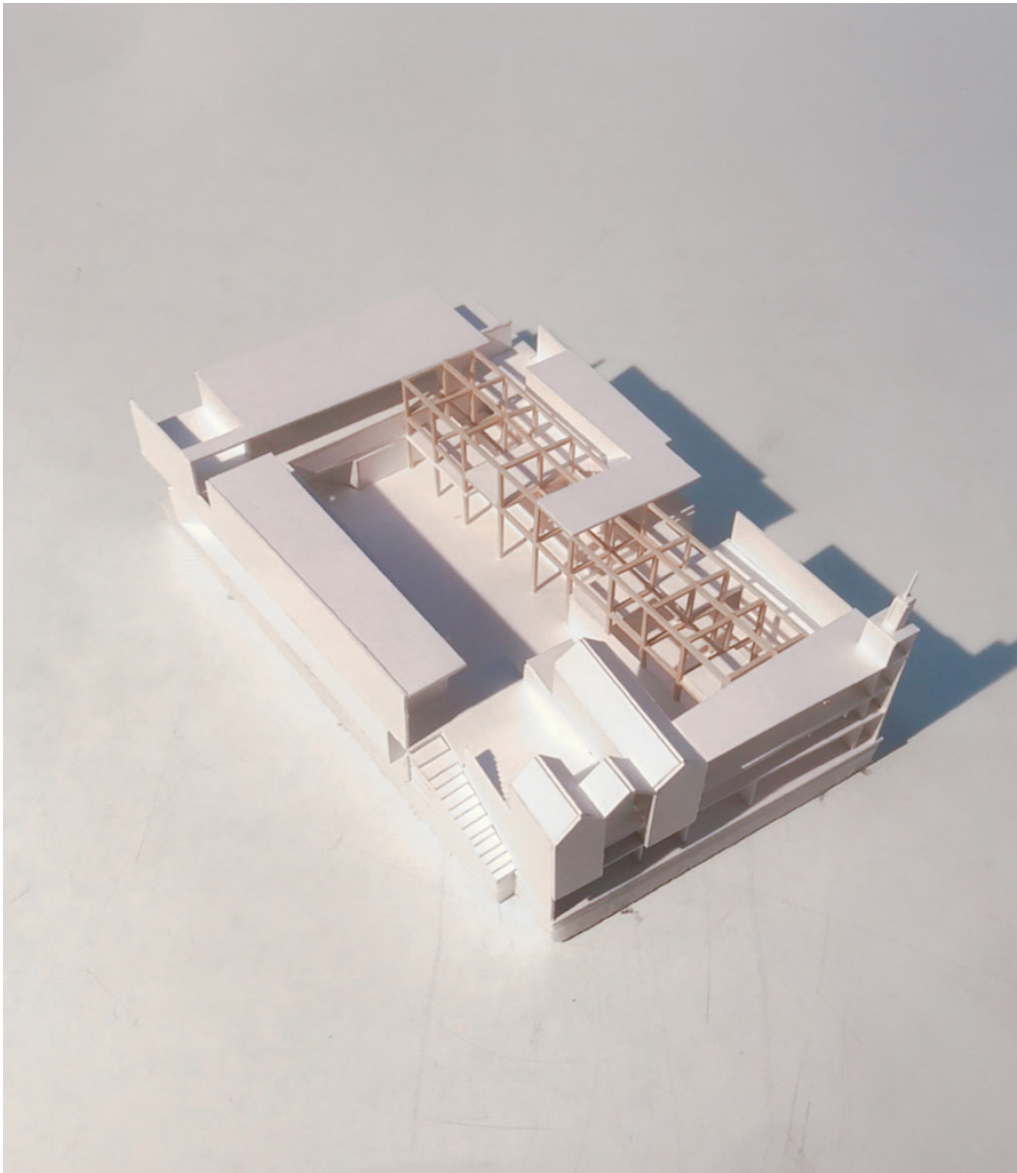
The **hidden** element focused on the entrance design. If the entrance was designed to stand out from pedestrians, there was a problem that there could be fewer people on the existing shopping street. Therefore, it was concluded

that the entrance to the park for people who came for socializing should be hidden while maintaining the existing shopping street. The entrance that can face from each street was designed differently according to the urban context, and through this, it was possible to design by hiding the entrance in a line that does not harm the flow of people in the city.

The park where the community takes place should make people feel comfortable. Therefore, the **shell** was designed in a way to keep the existing façade of the Dordrecht V&D department store as much as possible. The park is protected from the outside, unlike a busy city center; you can feel as though you have entered a new world.

Simply designing a park in the city center may not create a good public space. Therefore, when different programs are connected, an environment is created in which people who come for different purposes can meet and communicate with each other. The programmatic connection was designed based on the sequence characteristics of the Dordrecht city. This **sequence** does not create something completely new. In the city of Dordrecht, connections between public spaces were already appearing in the urban context. After entering the city center and walking along the canal, Arend Maartenshof comes out, followed by the Dordrecht museum, the cloister garden and the Statenplein. If the project acts as a bridge connecting Schefersplein, the city can be formed like a necklace of public spaces.





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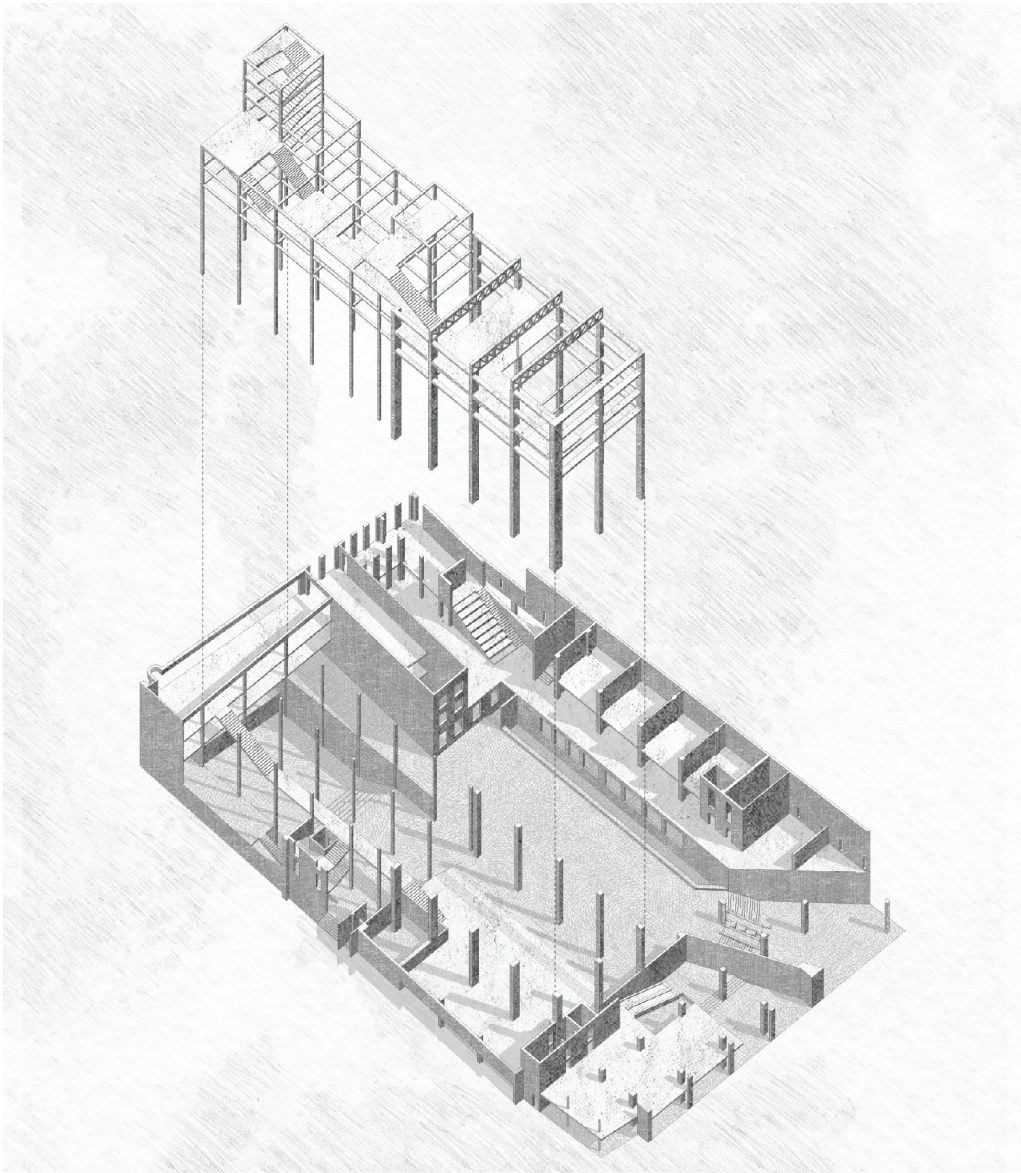
Figure 2.4. Developed Model of Heritage Park 2.0 Project, Wood and Paper, 42 x 30 cm, 1:300.

Vacant Heritage - V&D's Department Stores

## 2.5. Design Overview

How these five elements, the main point of the 'Heritage Park 2.0' project, were formed architecturally and spatially can be thought of in one tool. In the future, if you design a public space where people can gather even in different cities and projects, it can serve as a guideline. Of course, I think the case of 'connection' and 'dissolution' can play a role in the particular urban context of Dordrecht. I think this method can be applied in situations where the square is adjacent and the surrounding context can naturally enter the building. On the other hand, 'Hidden', 'Shell', and 'Sequence' can be used as a method in other projects too. A good public space can be designed when designing the entrance inconspicuously, creating a space protected from the surroundings, and creating a relationship between various programs.

Of course, these ideas cannot be designed only by an architect. In fact, among the feedback received during the P3 presentation, there was a question, 'How much will the public perceive and accept this space as a public space?' In reflection of this feedback, a grand stair was designed to make the square look more real square, and a regular rhythmic column was designed, and bright marble was used. However, in order to design a better public space, I do not think it can be done with the design of only one architect. One cannot really represent the many residents of Dordrecht. Therefore, if urban planners, municipalities, and Dordrecht citizens participate in the design process and reflect their opinions together, a good public space can be designed that can receive more empathy.



**Left**  
Figure 2.5. Future Dordrecht  
V&D Drawing.

## Chapter 3 : Reflection from a Scientific Point of View

### 3.1. Reflection as an Architect

Since the design was conducted through research, 'the Heritage Park 2.0' project was designed as a final product by testing and analyzing socializing space from various viewpoints. Sometimes architects created green spaces and community spaces in unimportant spaces like corner spaces. However, people can often find in cities that the space is not being used properly. I think this is because the characteristics of the space where people meet and talk are not properly reflected. That's why this project can be helpful for architects who want to design spaces where people meet and the community takes place.

In particular, in the case of a project that attempts to renovate heritage buildings after the 20th century, it can be helpful to broaden the idea of what value should be focused and changed to a building for another purpose. Buildings after post modernism are not much different outwardly from today. Therefore, there are many cases where it is judged that there is no historical and aesthetic value and

demolished. However, there are various values of buildings. In people's memories, buildings can be designed with a variety of values, such as the frequently used streets, escalator halls that symbolize department stores, and new brick materials and façade designs renovated in 1999.

Finally, it can be helpful for projects on the relationship between heritage architectures and cities. When a huge space no longer plays a role in the city, the architect does not simply consider the structure, layout, and skin of the building, but the background in which the building was created, the meaning of heritage buildings throughout the city, and the context of the city. We need to look at the building from various scales. Dordrecht V&D has established itself as a symbol of Dordrecht, not just a department store in the 20th century. Therefore, much discussion and testing is needed on how 'Heritage Park 2.0' project will work in the city. These tests and design trials can help the architects to broaden their considering scale.

### 3.2. Contribution to the defining of Public Space in the City

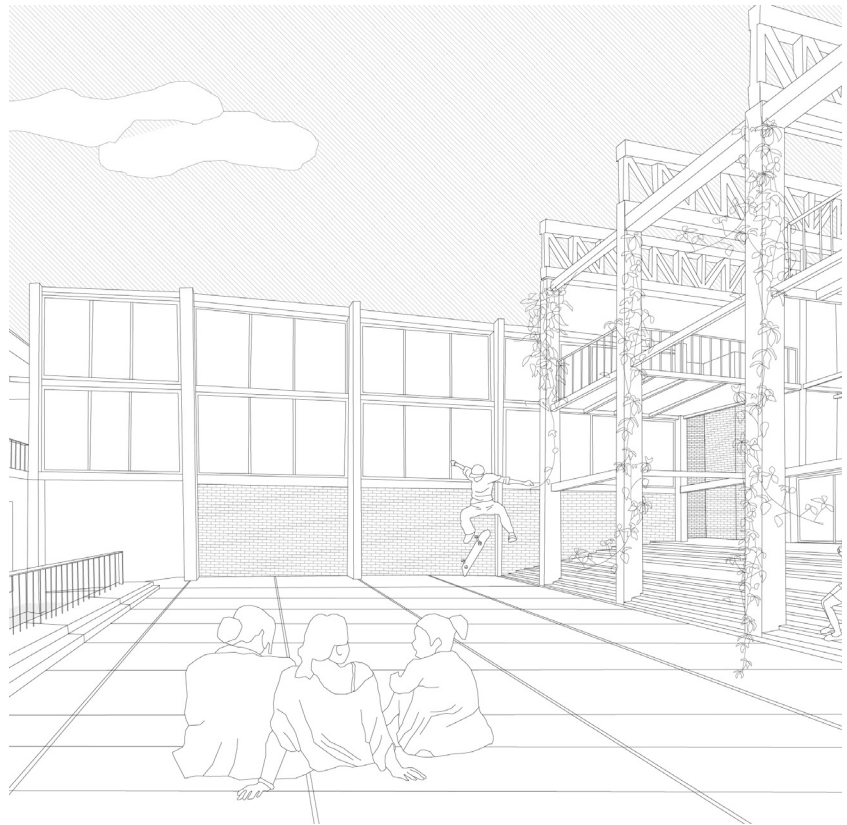
“As a project, we proposed to do nothing other than maintenance work, simple and immediate: redo the grave of the ground, clean more often, treat the lime trees, slightly modify the circulation (...), likely to improve the use of the place and to satisfy the inhabitants.” (Lacaton & Vassal, 1996)

In a public space, the intentions and thoughts of the architect are important, but the thoughts of the people who use the space are the most important. As I said earlier, architects should rethink the meaning of heritage and research on various scales on how to renovate a building. In addition, the most important point is the behavioral patterns of people. When looking into how the Dutch people use public space in the city of Dordrecht, they needed a space for gathering, not a special space. Walking around the city of Dordrecht all day was the key to figuring out which spaces people gather and which spaces people need. A special space and a complex space can arouse

people’s curiosity. However, what I felt while conducting this graduation project was that the city lacked a small, protected space that people could feel. Therefore, it is my design that transforms an abandoned interior space into an exterior space in a dense city. The main purpose was to create a space that users could be satisfied with and a better public space by creating a small shelter.

#### Bottom

Figure 3.1. Main New Square in the Heritage Park 2.0 Project.



## Conclusion

As mentioned earlier in the introduction, heritage architecture in the 20th century needs to be discovered and carefully renovated in various fields. 'Heritage Park 2.0' is a project that focuses on the space where social community can be designed among various values. It is a design project that visualizes an invisible abstract social space through an architectural tool called 'space', and studies and tests how the public can perceive such public spaces. Dordrecht V&D is not on the heritage list except for the original façade facing Scheffersplein. But that does not mean the other parts are not worthless. It is a project that informs the necessity of approaching the idea of heritage in various ways in accordance with the rapidly changing societies.

As a personal process, I was most impressed to know that research and design are closely related while working on the project. The research question could be determined by my moti-

vation and background. And based on this, I was able to determine the design question by analyzing what are the design problems in Dordrecht. The most interesting thing is that I did not specifically set the design concept. In the process of researching, I wondered what kind of meaning would a social space mean to people, and since this social space is the largest concept that governs design in general, a special architectural concept was not needed.

In addition, during the process of designing, I need to be back to research many times. I think that design proceeds based on a number of decisions, and the solution for this decision was that most of them could be found through research. From this point of view, even when working on a project after graduation in the future, I think that it is not design that simply draws beautiful drawings. I think that design is always to provide various solutions based on research.

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